

## Message Text

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TAGS ELAB CA

SUBJ OFFICIAL OF CANADIAN UNION OF

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES VISITS HALIFAX

1. AS PART OF A COUNTRY WIDE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR STAFF OFFICERS IN THE VARIOUS REGIONS, THE DIRECTOR OF ORGANIZATION FOR THE CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES (CUPE), J F LOFTY MAC MILLAN, VISITED HALIFAX ON NOVEMBER 24 AND GAVE AN INTERVIEW TO LOCAL PRESS AND RADIO.

2. IN A CLEAR ATTEMPT TO ENLIST SUPPORT IN ATLANTIC CANADA FOR HIS FIGHT AGAINST WAGE CONTROLS, MR MAC MILLAN GAVE MUCH EMPHASIS TO HIS BELIEF THAT FEDERAL WAGE CONTROLS WILL WIDEN THE ECONOMIC DISPARITY BETWEEN ATLANTIC CANADA AND THE REST OF THE COUNTRY. HE SAID THAT PAST ATTEMPTS TO CLOSE THE GAP BETWEEN WAGE RATES IN ATLANTIC CANADA AND THE NATIONAL AVERAGE WOULD NOW BE HALTED. THE WAGE GUIDELINES WILL FREEZE THE DISPARITY AT ITS PRESENT LEVEL AND THE DIFFERENCE WILL SLOWLY WIDEN DURING THE DURATION OF THE CONTROL PROGRAM.

3. MR MAC MILLAN ASSERTED THAT THE PROBLEM OF INFLATION IS A QUESTION OF PRICES AND CORPORATE PROFITS AND NOT THE RESULT OF WAGE DEMANDS. HE SAID THAT PRICES AND PROFITS HAVE ALWAYS KEPT AHEAD OF WAGES AND THAT THE

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GOVERNMENT DOES NOT HAVE THE CAPABILITY OF ADEQUATLY

CONTROLLING PRICES AND PROFIT MARGINS. "THE GOVERNMENT IS ONLY ATTACKING LABOR, AND IN PARTICULAR, THE PUBLIC SERVANT AT THE FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL LEVEL."

4. FREEZING OF PRICES BY FOOD STORE CHAINS, ACCORDING TO MR MAC MILLAN, WOULD MEAN LITTLE OR NO SAVING FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC. HE SAID THAT WHEN THE PRICES WERE FROZEN THEY WERE ALREADY AT THEIR MAXIMUM LEVEL AND THAT INSTEAD OF FREEZING PRICES, THE STORES SHOULD HAVE ROLLED THEM BACK IN ORDER TO PASS ON A REAL SAVING TO THE CONSUMER.

5. IN CONNECTION WITH THE DECISION OF CUPE'S MEMBERSHIP TO DEFY OPENLY THE CONTROLS AND RISK CONFRONTATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT, MR MAC MILLAN SAID, "AS FAR AS WE ARE CONCERNED, IT IS BARGAINING AS USUAL . WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEGOTIATE UNDER THE TERMS OF PROVINCIAL LABOR LEGISLATION". HE SAID THAT THE 210,000 MEMBERS OF CUPE ARE SOLIDLY BEHIND THE DECISION TO IGNORE WAGE GUIDELINES.

6. MR MAC MILLAN SAID THAT HE WAS FEARFUL THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD ENACT LEGISLATION TO SUSPEND CIVIL LIBERTIES WHEN CHALLENGED ON A MAJOR SCALE BY THE UNIONS.

7. THE MAJOR THRUST AGAINST PUBLIC EMPLOYEES, ACCORDING TO MAC MILLAN, COMES AT A TIME WHEN THE GOVERNMENT WORKERS ARE STARTING TO CATCHUP WITH THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

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